



Hand Therapy Review Course June 21-23, 2024 • Pomona, CA

Faculty Profiles

Aimee Aguillon, OTD, OTR/L, CHT

Aimee received her Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Therapy from Loma Linda University in 2000, and later completed a progressive Master to Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at the University of Southern California in 2019. Aimee has been practicing hand therapy throughout the greater Los Angeles area since the start of her career. Currently she works at Keck Medical Center of USC as an Assistant Professor in Clinical Occupational Therapy.

Joanne Mimm, PT, MPT, CHT

Joanne Mimm graduated from California State University, Northridge School of Physical Therapy in 1982 and went on to complete her Advanced Masters in Physical Therapy at Loma Linda University (LLU) in 1996. She became a board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist in 1994 and also achieved her Certification in Hand Therapy in 1996. She has taught at Loma Linda University, School of Physical Therapy as a clinical faculty member and has been part of the ASHT Review course faculty from 2016-2020. Over the past 25 years she has specialized in hands, founded the South Orange County Hand Therapy Study Group, and continues to have a passion for learning. Currently she is the director of Newport Hand Center in Newport Beach, CA. In her free time she enjoys pickleball, golf, hiking, family and friends, and working with Jr. High students at her church.

Melissa Magdangal, OTD, OTR/L, CHT

Melissa is an Occupational Therapist and Certified Hand Therapist at Newport Hand Center in Orange County, California. She graduated from UC Irvine, receiving her BA in Psychology and also received the Chancellor's Award of Distinction due to her exceptional contribution to UC Irvine through leadership, community service & research. Melissa went on to obtain her Master's of Occupational Therapy degree from San Jose State University and continued on to complete her Doctorate of Occupational Therapy at the University of Southern California with a focus on adult rehabilitation and upper extremity injuries. She has been practicing for four years, with the last three years practicing in hand therapy. In 2023 Melissa obtained the

Certified Hand Therapist credential and has been active in both state and national organizations. She is extremely passionate about providing evidence-based and client-centered care, and helping individuals return to activities they enjoy.

Alyssa Phillips, CScD, MOT, OTR/L

Alyssa Phillips is an Assistant Professor and Clinical Education Coordinator in the School of Occupational Therapy at Pacific University in Hillsboro, Oregon, where she teaches courses on anatomy, kinesiology, and adult physical disability. She holds a Masters degree in Occupational Therapy from Saint Francis University and a Clinical Science Doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh with a focus on knowledge translation and adolescent pain management.

With a clinical background in chronic pain and symptom management in industrial, upper extremity and neurological populations, Alyssa has been an OT for over six years and transitioned to full time academic in 2022. Her scholarship focuses on developing wellness curriculum, pain management, and neurodiversity affirming practice. Alyssa has volunteered with ASHT for three years and has enjoyed supporting education efforts, research efforts, and contributing to continuing education.

Christina Schmidt, OTR, CHT

Christina received her Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. She became a Certified Hand Therapist in 1991 at the inaugural examination.

Christina has had a varied career working in largely surgeon-owned outpatient practices, including an active work compensation hand surgical practice. She worked with hand surgeons at Kaiser Permanente for 10 years in Los Angeles and joined the medical staff at Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach nine years ago.

Christina became involved with Kaiser when she became part of the formative team of educators that developed and taught the Kaiser Hand Fellowship program, the first APTA accredited hand fellowship program in the country, that ran for over 10 years. For several years, she also travelled nationally teaching splinting workshops for Performance Health. There is no better way to learn than to teach and these experiences helped drive the passion that continues to enrich Christina's current practice treating hand injuries.

Christina is delighted to be invited back to join the ASHT faculty and present at the ASHT Hand Therapy Review Course.

Dr. Steven Snyder, PT, DPT, EdD, CSCS

Dr. Steven Snyder is a distinguished Physical Therapist and Associate Professor at Western University of Health Sciences, serving in the Department of Physical Therapy Education and the College of Health Sciences. He has been the course instructor for Anatomy for over ten years and currently holds the position of Assistant Dean of Innovation and Technology for the College of Health Sciences. Dr. Snyder earned his B.S. in Kinesiology and Health Promotion from Cal Poly Pomona and completed his Doctorate in Physical Therapy at Western University of Health

Sciences. He further advanced his academic qualifications by obtaining an Educational Doctorate in Health Professions Education from A.T. Still University.

Dr. Snyder's research interests focus on the description and functional impact of human anatomical muscle variations, the development of innovative teaching strategies to enhance student engagement and comprehension, and the integration of advanced technologies such as 3D printing, virtual reality, and mobile applications in physical therapy education. His clinical expertise includes his work at the Western Diabetes Institute, a patient-centered, interprofessional evaluation and treatment center dedicated to diabetes care. Additionally, Dr. Snyder has experience in private practice, specializing in orthopedic and sports care in Orange County. Currently, he treats patients with orthopedic and sports needs in the in-home environment.

Elizabeth Souza, DPT, CHT

Liz has been a physical therapist for over 30 years in the outpatient orthopedic setting. She has been a CHT since 1995 and is the director of hand therapy at Gary M. Souza, PT and Associates in Diamond Bar, CA. Liz has been involved with the USC Physical Therapy School since graduating in their first Advanced Standing DPT class in 1996. Serving as the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education, from 1996 – 1998, she helped develop the clinical curriculum for the entry level DPT program. She continues to guest lecture in the entry level program on the wrist and hand and mentor in the Orthopedic Residency Program. Inspiring others to pursue a career in quality hand rehabilitation is a driving force in her teaching endeavors.

Adrienne Tesarek, OTR/L, CHT

Adrienne Tesarek is a graduate of Louisiana State University and moved to California after graduation. Her career started at JCSD Medical Center as an inpatient therapist before transitioning to the outpatient department when she mentored to sit for the hand exam. She became a CHT in 2005. Since that time she has done teaching at Grossmont Community College in their OTA program and presented at OT conferences on custom orthotic fabrication and conservative management of thumb CMC OA. In 2013 she moved to Los Angeles to work at JCTA and was a member of the Rehab Services Education Committee coordinating continuing education for her fellow OT's. Also during her time in Los Angeles she joined the non-profit Hand Therapy Society of Greater Los Angeles, serving as their secretary and is currently the president. She moved back to San Diego in 2021 and currently works for Palomar Health in Poway, CA. She has taken the position of president of the San Diego Hand Special Interest Group and formed a new education committee at Palomar Health.

Rachel Thomson, PT, PT, CHT

Rachel graduated from California State University Long Beach with her Bachelor's of Science in Kinesiology Exercise Science in December 2016 and with her Doctor of Physical Therapy in May 2020 and immediately began pursuing a career in hand therapy. She has been observing as a student and an intern at South County Orthopedic Specialists since April 2019 and began practicing at SCOS immediately after graduation. She earned her Hand Therapy Certification in November 2023.

Additionally, Rachel teaches the Hand Therapy curriculum for the CSULB Doctor of Physical Therapy Program, works in the rehab departments for Orange County Skilled Nursing Facilities and is a Parkinson's Wellness Recovery Certified Therapist. Rachel also serves as the Secretary for the Hand Therapy Society of Greater Orange County and is a member of the American Society of Hand Therapists and the Neurocollaborative. When Rachel isn't working, you can find her performing with Musical Theater Village, on a long run or bike ride, eating ice cream, watching Academy Award winning Best Pictures, and spending time with her twin sister.